

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 49

By Powell

A RESOLUTION to commemorate the 150th anniversary of
Montgomery Bell Academy.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly often recognize significant milestones in the history of educational institutions that have a profound impact on the people of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery Bell Academy (MBA), the oldest independent boys school in the state, opened its doors on September 9, 1867, with twenty-six scholars in two rooms; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery Bell Academy's heritage goes back to the University of Nashville, Cumberland College, Davidson Academy, and the earliest days of the pioneer settlement on the Cumberland River and is closely linked to James Robertson, the founder of Nashville, who secured the passage of "an act for promotion of learning in the county of Davidson" in 1785; and

WHEREAS, the University of Nashville, the precursor to MBA, was led by Reverend Phillip Lindsley, whose influence helped Nashville become recognized as the "Athens of the West"—later changed to "Athens of the South"; and

WHEREAS, Dr. John Berrien Lindsley, who succeeded his father, Reverend Lindsley, as president of the University of Nashville in 1855, merged the Western Military Institute with the University of Nashville. With the approach of the Civil War, military instruction was added and became very popular as the school grew rapidly; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery Bell, a Pennsylvanian, came to Dickson County, Tennessee, circa 1800 and purchased the Cumberland iron furnace from James Robertson and left \$20,000 to the University of Nashville upon his death in 1855; and

WHEREAS, in 1867, the bequest of Montgomery Bell was used by John Berrien Lindsley to open Montgomery Bell Academy with the mission to provide a "first-class grammar and high school for boys"; and

WHEREAS, in 1881, the school moved from its original location to a six-acre site at the corner of Lindsley and Asylum streets, where it remained until 1915; and

WHEREAS, in 1911, MBA Trustee Judge Robert Ewing hired Isaac Ball as Headmaster, a position he would hold for thirty years; and

WHEREAS, in 1915, with an eye toward expansion, the school moved to the thirty-two acre estate on Harding Road formerly owned by Garland Tinsley. At the time, the school was advertised as "The Country School for the City Boy." The school has remained at this location for 102 years; and

WHEREAS, following the retirement of Headmaster Ball, the school continued to flourish under the leadership of Headmasters J. M. Farrell, Howard Allen, and Dr. R. Lee Sager. Under Dr. Sager, the school adopted its Honor Code; and

WHEREAS, under the guidance of Headmaster Francis E. Carter, Jr., from 1957 to 1979, Montgomery Bell Academy became recognized as one of the finest preparatory schools in the country. Mr. Carter oversaw the implementation of Advanced Placement courses, a rise in the number of Merit Scholars, and the placement of graduates in some of the finest colleges and universities in the country. He also introduced the ideal of Gentleman, Scholar, Athlete—the principles which guide the school to this day; and

WHEREAS, from 1979 to 1993, Headmasters Gordon Bondurant and Dr. Douglas Paschall oversaw tremendous improvements to the campus on Harding Road, including the construction of a Junior School building, football and baseball stadiums, and the Davis Building to showcase the arts; and

WHEREAS, since 1994, MBA has continued to see improvements and expansion of its campus and facilities. Under the leadership of Headmaster Bradford Gioia, the school has seen the complete renovation of and additions to several buildings: the construction of a science

building; a building for math, English, and debate; a dining hall; a tennis center; and a soccer field with a parking garage below; and

WHEREAS, MBA has also expanded the geographical footprint of the school, adding ten acres on the Harding Road campus, ten more acres in Sylvan Park, and 225 acres at Long Mountain in McMinnville that is home to hiking trails, playing fields, and an observatory; and

WHEREAS, as the school has grown, MBA has also expanded its reach around the globe, providing school-funded travel grants and exchanges throughout the country and on six continents; and

WHEREAS, while the school has stressed developing the character of each boy in attendance through special programs, an advisory system, and an emphasis on honor and humility, MBA has also maintained an academic reputation that places it among the best schools in the country. In the last two decades, MBA has produced more than 1,700 National Merit Semifinalists; state, regional, and national champions in math, science, and debate; and hundreds of Advanced Placement Scholars; and

WHEREAS, for 150 years, MBA has helped shape the lives of thousands of young men of honor, vigor, and intellectual curiosity who leave its halls prepared to make a difference in their community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we commemorate Montgomery Bell Academy on the occasion of its 150th anniversary and honor its 150 years of excellence in educating the boys of Middle Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.